

6 April 1986

Ex-Sudan Aide Gets 2 Jail Terms for Role In Ethiopian Airlift

By SHEILA RULE

Special to The New York Times

KHARTOUM, the Sudan, April 5 — A former First Vice President in the Government of President Gaafar al-Nimeiry, who was overthrown last April, was sentenced today to two consecutive 30-year jail terms for his role in secretly airlifting Ethiopian Jews out of the Sudan to Israel.

The former official, Maj. Gen. Omar Mohammed el-Tayeb, was found guilty of undermining the Constitution, instigating war against the state, treason and spying. He received what under Sudanese law are two life sentences.

The prosecution said it would appeal the sentence and demand the death penalty. Mr. Tayeb, who pleaded not guilty, can also appeal.

The trial, which lasted more than four months, was seen by some Western diplomats and Sudanese officials as possibly affecting relations between the Sudan and the United States, which is its largest aid donor.

Trial Emphasized Nimeiry Rule

The Sudanese Government used the trial to highlight what it said it believed were the failures of Mr. Nimeiry's nearly 16-year rule — he was an ally of the United States — and to look closely at the roles of American officials in the Sudan, most notably Ambassador Hume A. Horan.

Attorney General Omar Abdel Ati said the airlift was supervised by the United States Embassy here and that the Central Intelligence Agency paid Mr. Tayeb \$2 million, donated by Jewish organizations, as an "installment for his services" in bringing about the Sudan's cooperation.

Western diplomats in Khartoum said shortly after the trial began that United States officials had lodged official complaints about charges made in the trial, characterizing them as a distortion of the humanitarian goal of the airlift.

The Attorney General said the airlift constituted strategic support for Israel. The Sudanese Constitution and penal code prohibit dealings with Israel.